

Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



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Cougars Continue to Care About Clean Air

The Member

Centennial High School's Environmental Service Learning class performs hands-on projects inside and outside the school. Through these projects, the class learns about human impacts on the environment. This year we saw a campus-wide change. The class was small, and two of the Ecology teachers noticed a need. They took their classes outside and involved them in hands-on projects. One class began litter pick-ups and beautification projects, while the other class worked on solar panels and beautification. Through teamwork, the Ecology students joined the Service Learning students in creating a better environment on campus and in the local community.

The Story

There were so many different people doing different Environmental projects at Centennial this year, it was hard to keep track of everything. The students worked very hard and involved more of the school community this year. One team in the Service Learning class continued the recycling tradition at Centennial, and another team took on the EPA Indoor Air Quality Tools for Schools program. Centennial had been plagued with many complaints about indoor air quality. Most complaints were about mold, asthma, dust and smells. The students used the 1st semester to research all aspects of indoor air quality. They made 2 power point presentations – one with the goal of getting support from the administration, and the second was to educate the teachers about indoor air quality. They made a teacher packet for distribution that included a teacher checklist and instructions. When the teachers returned the packets, the students then compiled the data and did a walk-through of the building. They had 2 teacher representatives and an administrative representative on the air quality team. The team found 2 exhaust fans not running, learned about outside air requirements, and were able to give the teachers better peace of mind about the indoor air. Once the teachers became involved, they were able to see their impact and the things they could do to help, determining where dust comes from, keeping the room cleaner, not using air fresheners, and what conditions create mold. The general feeling about the building changed.

In the meantime, the two Ecology teachers were busy with their classes. One class saw the campus and surrounding area was littered, so they began litter pick-ups. The campus looked great. Then they started beautification projects. They began weeding flower beds, putting down mulch and trimming plants. The second Ecology class was one of six schools to receive a donation of 4 solar panels from TVA, TEEN and CETE. The students wired the project with help from TVA and the

Maintenance Shop. One fluorescent lamp for the greenhouse was run off the panels, with the potential to run a fan and a pump.

The students continued their tradition of Carpool To School for Earth Day, the Household Battery Drive for Household Hazardous Waste Day, and mentoring 2nd Graders at Liberty Elementary.

The Success

Students and teachers were able to learn real world information and applications. They learned the impact they can have on their indoor environment, and things they can do to make it better. Two exhaust fans were repaired as a result of the IAQ walk-through, and indoor air will be improved by those repairs. Students at Centennial will be able to utilize the solar panels as a learning tool for years to come. Williamson County's Air Care TV invited Centennial students to create a program that can be viewed on the web and will reach potentially thousands of people. 452 students participated in the Carpool to School day, and 750 batteries were diverted from the landfill and delivered to the HHW collection day. Perhaps the best success this year was the involvement of more classes at Centennial in environmental activities. This year over 150 students influenced the environment on Centennial's campus and in the community. An important goal this year was to start up a sustainable IAQ program. One of the Ecology classes will continue the program in years to come.

The Pollution Prevented

The pollution prevented was difficult to measure. By carpooling, the students contributed to cleaner air in their community and conserved gasoline. The battery collection kept unnecessary metals and acids out of our ground and potentially groundwater. However, the greatest prevention may have been in the area of Indoor Air Pollution. Most teachers did not realize the harmful affects of air fresheners, copiers etc. Education was the key to helping students and teachers make educated decisions about potential pollutants. Although all of that is not measurable, the potential is definitely there.

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